



Eph^m W Bull
 "Concord Grape"

Originator of Concord
 Grape



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ORIGIN OF THE CONCORD GRAPE

Work of E. W. Bull
Began in 1836.

Experimented With a Native
Vine Found on His Farm.

Lecture at Horticultural
Hall Tells Results.

The series of free lectures which will be given every Saturday morning at 11 in Horticultural hall, under the auspices of the Massachusetts horticultural society, during the winter season, was opened yesterday by Wilfred Wheeler of Concord, who gave a highly instructive and interesting lecture on "The Concord Grape and Its Originator."

Mr Wheeler traced the growth of the various kinds of grapes in America, leading up to the origin of the concord grape, which was due to the efforts of Ephraim Wales Bull, who was born in Boston in 1806, and who finally removed with his family to Concord in 1836,

where he decided to settle on a 17-acre farm he had purchased. The soil on this farm was of a sandy nature with a slope to the south, and Mr Bull recognized great possibilities in it for grape growing.

There was a native vine, named vitis labrusca, growing in one corner of his farm, which he watched carefully. The habits of the vine pleased him, and so he felt greatly encouraged to use this grape for the experiments he wished to make. Mr Bull continued planting seed each year from his new vine until the original wild habit was completely broken up, and from the original stock as black as night grapes were obtained, delicate of texture and of the most agreeable flavor.

During all these years Mr Bull had kept up his business of gold-beating in a small shop near his cottage, but had devoted the larger part of his time to his vines, that he loved so well. He had heretofore found his trade more profitable than farming; but now that he had produced what he firmly believed to be the best hardy grape for New England, he set about developing it and getting it ready to disseminate.

In the summer of 1853, having worked up a large stock of vines, he placed the whole in the hands of a firm who advertised it extensively. In 1854 the vines were sold for \$5 each and for \$40 a dozen to the trade. The first season's sales amounted to \$3200, a very large sum for a new fruit in those days, but within a short time every nurseryman in the country had a stock of it, and the sale slipped from the hands of the originator, bringing much money to others and very little to himself.

Mr Bull was awarded a silver medal, valued at \$60, in 1855, for the concord grape, by the Massachusetts horticultural society, also the gold medal of the society for the best hardy seedling concord, which was proved, after a thorough trial, so universally adapted to general cultivation throughout the United States, and the most reliable grape for vineyard cultivation in Massachusetts.

Mr Bull lived to see one of the results of his labors, the concord grape, spread with amazing rapidity over the country, leaving wealth and prosperity in its path, while he, the originator, was all but forgotten and broken in spirit. He died Sept 26, 1895, and the pathetic epitaph on his grave fittingly marks his life work: "He sowed; others reaped."



Ephraim Bull, who originated the Concord grape by crossing the wild grape with the Isabella. The parent vine is still productive.

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